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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to clear up some of the confusion that has developed around interpretations of Bernstein's concept of code-distribution. After a rapid review of the main dimensions of linguistic variation within a given society, with particular attention to sociolectal and register variation, 'codes' are examined and compared with registers and sociolects. There follows a more detailed investigation of the nature and implications of codes in the Bernsteinian sense, relating to the social and, more precisely the educational context. The conclusions are that 'code' and 'lect' correspond to radically different types of variation, and that code-variation is by no means as socially exclusive or inherently so politically charged as many writers claim. Two points should be borne in mind while reading this paper; it represents work in progress towards a fuller treatment of the subject, and the final presentation of "restricted code" is exaggerated deliberately to provide a counter-argument to polemic current in Europe in 1974. (Author)

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SOCIOLECTS, CODES AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

Introduction The aim of this paper is to review the broad categories of linguistic variation and to attempt to establish the relationships between them, in particular between sociolects and codes, then to discuss briefly the possible pedagogical implications of this redefined model.

The basic hypothesis is that there are two fundamental types of language variation - which we can refer to summarily as lects and codes. These are felt to be radically different in nature; they operate in different linguistic and social dimensions. It is also felt that lects and codes as objects of study could be said to correspond to the two main branches of sociolinguistics at present. Lects, as the objects of descriptive study, represent the correlation approach, which is summed up in Hasan's definition of dialects (a term she uses where I use lects; the reasons should become clear in due course):

> Dialects, whether they correlate with time, space or social attributes of the speech community, remain a descriptive category, relating the manifest to the manifest. (1971:258)

In other words, dialect- or lect-oriented sociolinguistic study implies a twofold description, of linguistic and extralinguistic features respectively; the two descriptions are then as it were superimposed to plot areas of significant co-occurrence. On the other hand, code-oriented studies could be presented as the major focal point for the branch of sociolinguistics referred to by Pride, among others, as the "interaction" movement.[1] Although the term "interaction" is commonly associated with the interaction that takes place between participants in the communication encounter - still a descriptive category if we adopt the Pragmatic approach[2] - in my opinion the essential aspect

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of interaction study is not the analysis of the surface manifestations of behaviour - the choreography of the encounter - but at a deeper level, the interaction between social (in the broadest sense) and linguistic processes, viewed in terms of communicative competence, the end result of this interaction.[3]

To sum up this basic distinction, the study of lects, relating aspects of language structure to aspects of social structure, plotting co-occurrences, is open to the gibe that sociolinguistics is still "a hyphenated discipline". In contrast, the study of codes leads us to examine the relationship between underlying social and cognitive processes and their linguistic manifestations in terms of their mutually determining roles. In this perspective it seems inadmissible to press for the retention of the hyphen.

LECTS The term lect is used advisedly, as my contention is that there is a hierarchical relationship between geographically, socially and chronologically distributed variants of language. It should be pointed out that lects are typified by their complementary distribution through social or material space, or between generations, regardless of the situation in which the linguistic forms are used.

Dialect is taken as the superordinate category. The formal features that distinguish between dialects coincide with geographical distribution over the territory of the speech community. The distinction between dialect and "language" seems to reflect political and institutional contingencies rather than any inherent linguistic properties; one criterion for according "full language status" is that the range of speech forms in question must be capable of operating in all the functional situations of the corresponding community. In fact, the same can be said of many dialects - as in the case of Italy, where there is no single standard lect, but a series of lects (dialects) spread along the peninsula. The alternative is for a standard to be adopted, usually at the expense of existing lects, as in the case of Provençal, originally a language in every respect, but gradually demoted to dialect status as a result of political and administrative

centralisation. The point being made here is that dialects are at least potentially able to carry out all the tasks we associate traditionally with the term "language".

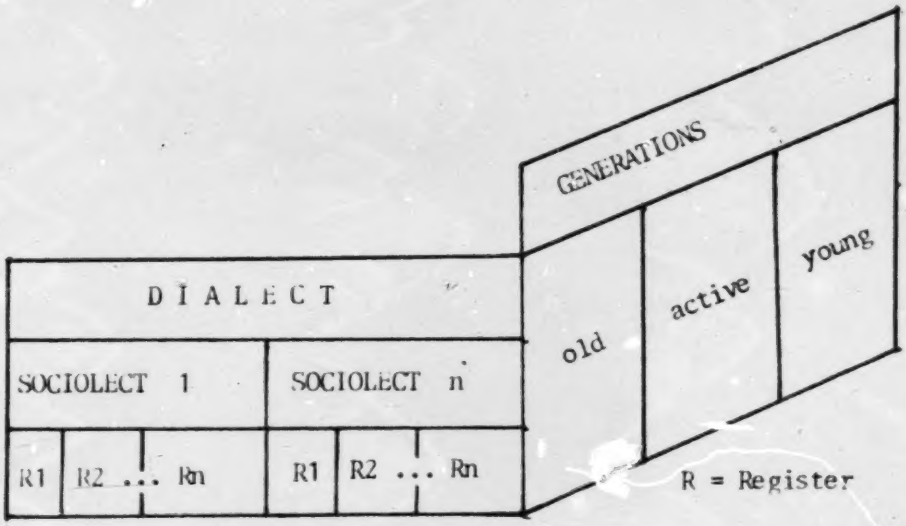
Sociolects are again in complementary distribution, but this time across the structure of society - which may be a language or a dialect community. Again, the existence of a dominant sociolect depends not on inherent linguistic superiorities or inadequacies but more on the distribution of power within the society. In this connection it is interesting to note the emergence of new dominant sociolects as a reflection of changing social hierarchies. For instance, the relative weakening of the once mandatory "Standard English with RP" - a dominant sociolect associated exclusively with social status (unlike most other dominant Western lects, which generally have geographical associations as well, e.g. with the seat of government). It would be reckless to affirm that Standard English with RP is a dead sociolect, but it must be conceded that (a) it is evolving rapidly, as we can observe by comparing BBC archive recordings made over the last 40 years[4] and (b) it now coexists with emerging regional standards such as Standard East London (much used in radio and television) and Standard Northern (with "Ni62" phonetic system). These new lects carry not only regional associations but also social overtones allegedly less marked - but in reality differently marked - by comparison with the old Standard.

The contention is, here again, that all sociolects are potential candidates for language status; pragmatic limitations on the range of their uses are the result of social, not linguistic pressures.

Chronologically distributed lects are perhaps best illustrated as differences between generations of speakers, whether these generations are defined in terms of major turning-points in the development of a society (war, revolution, etc.) or simply in terms of decades (the emergence of the new regional standard lects of English could be taken as generation-linked, stemming ultimately from the effects of the 1944 Education Act). The

chronological differentiation of language forms will apply at every level, whether in terms of dialect, sociolect or language. Again, this differentiation in no way affects the range of potential uses of the lect, though it should be borne in mind that the number and relative distribution of dialects and sociolects will probably vary from one generation to the next, thus giving the impression of greater or lesser communication potential in some cases.

The point being made is that lects represent basically the language repertory available to a given speaker by virtue of his geographical, social and chronological provenance. From this we can derive a first, albeit over-simplified model:



Clearly this model must be refined and expanded to take into account phenomena such as the existence of non-geographical standard forms and, as a probable consequence, diglossia. This, however, would require considerable time and an expansion of our subject which are neither possible nor indeed appropriate here.[5]

The term lect was originally coined by Roger Shuy and his co-founders of the Lectological Association, which meets annually to discuss aspects of language variation. In their vocabulary the term is used to designate any and all forms of linguistic variation. I am unhappy about this usage, since it ignores (although of course the lectologists do not) a crucial distinction. For this reason, the preceding diagram makes the distinction between lects and registers.

REGISTERS Lects as I have defined them represent the potential whole language of any given speaker. They are defined in terms of forces which basically the speaker can do little or nothing to change. The next question is: what does one do with one's lect? The answer will reveal examples of the non-lectal dimension of language variation - variation in terms of the extralinguistic situation, a compound of many parameters including, for example, the status relationship between speakers, the function of the communication act, or the language medium used. This is the type of variation often referred to as "varieties of language" or, perhaps more satisfactorily, as register variation. The most economical and elegant definition of registers is to be found in Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964) who refer to varieties of language "distinguished according to use".

CODES AS DISTINCT FROM SOCIOLECTS AND REGISTERS Given this theoretical framework, and given the prevalent interpretation of Bernstein's concepts of restricted and elaborated codes as nearly synonymous with working-class and middle-class language respectively, it is tempting to look on codes as sociolects or socially distributed bundles of registers. If this were so, it would be enough to develop an adequate correlationist framework for the description of registers and lects; codes would have nothing new to bring to the debate. However, there is more to it than that: while code and register are similar in that there is in each case a causal relationship between extra-linguistic factors and linguistic behaviour, they differ in that the non-linguistic factors operate at different levels. Register depends on the immediate, momentary situation of language use, whereas

code-determined behaviour (including linguistic behaviour) reflects an underlying set of linked social and psychological attributes. Register is changing and transient, code is for life.

In this light, dealing with permanent attributes, we could equate code and dialect or, more temptingly (and many have succombed to the temptation) code and sociolect. But whereas lects, as I have pointed out, are at least potentially capable of dealing with any communication situation, it is maintained that codes will determine the limits of the range of situations in which the language user can operate adequately. Clearly we are dealing with very different phenomena; at this point it would be appropriate to look a little more closely at codes.

CODES It is not my intention here to dwell on the shortcomings of Bernstein's theory of codes, on inconsistencies between its various formulations or on the methodological weaknesses of related empirical studies; ample critiques exist already, notably those published by Coulthard (1969) and by Bernstein himself (CCC,1971,introduction). It must be admitted, though, that it is extremely easy to misunderstand Bernstein (a fact which may well be illustrated by this paper) and that as a result it may be that the widespread misrepresentations of his theory are not all based on nefarious intent. However, in the course of much of the debate over recent years,particularly in the initial context of codes considered as favourable or limiting factors in education and socialisation, codes have emerged as emotionally charged concepts, often with polemic overtones. It would be useful to see if they also exist as cool, scientific concepts with the neutrality of, say, dialect or register. This is not to say that codes may have no relevance to social or educational reform. But there is a time and a place for indignation, and these are not in scientific enquiry; moreover, it seems evident that if reformist arguments are to be optimally effective, they should be grounded on data gathered and interpreted in a spirit of objectivity.

The present discussion of codes is based principally on two of Bernstein's published papers: "A sociolinguistic approach to social learning" (1965) and "A sociolinguistic approach to socialisation" (1971) which I consider to contain the meatiest formulations of the thesis. The third main source is Ruqaiya Hasan's paper "Codes, register and social dialect" (1971).
It should be remembered from the outset that Bernstein is by inclination, by training and by experience a sociologist, and this is reflected in his treatment of linguistic data. This is made clear at the beginning of his published career, in the 1958 paper, whose source disciplines are sociology and psychology, and which focusses on the relationship between social class and educational failure. Yet even in this first paper language is introduced as a major determining factor; there is an attempt to relate social class (defined, significantly, in terms of the length and nature of the individual's educational experience) with differing types of language and language use, presented at this stage as a binary distinction between the unfortunately lanelled Public and Formal Languages. The nomenclature is confusing since "Public Language", the ancestor of restricted code, is if anything private and hermetic in terms of its accessibility to the speech community as a whole; its "public-ness" seems to correspond to a low degree of personalisation and individualisation at the semantic level. It might also be equated simply with "the language used by the public" or, more exactly, by a certain proletariat, since in his 1959 paper Bernstein gives four off-the-cuff examples of public languages: Elephant and Castle, the Angel Islington, the Gorbals and Tiger Bay... "Formal Language", corresponding roughly to the later elaborated code, in fact covers the whole range of linguistic formality; in this context "formal" should be taken as denoting a knowledge of and sensitivity to formal relationships - this is borne out by Bernstein's insistence on syntax in his attempts to list the characteristic attributes of "public" and "formal".

In later papers, the two language types are redefined and associated with the terms and concepts of restricted and elaborated code; the relative importance attached to the various linguistic features invoked in each case varies quite considerably, but some basic traits remain constant, in particular:

- Restricted code language is characterised by a high degree of structural predictability, elaborated code language by a wider range of choice (mainly at the level of "syntax"); while this is initially a linguistic criterion subject to empirical verification, ultimately it corresponds to a major psychological distinction: the restricted code user will process reality in terms of broad, stylised categories, whereas the elaborated code user will be more sensitive to the specific identity of each experience.
- Restricted code entails a high degree of presupposition of shared contextual knowledge between participants; on the other hand, elaborated code is not based on any such assumption. This is primarily a sociological criterion, reflecting the degree and the nature of the solidarity between members of the social group and the expected nature of their common cultural experience. However, it may be manifested in verifiable linguistic terms, such as the relative frequency of exophoric pronouns - pronouns with no syntactic antecedent, but referring to features of the situational context.
- A third criterion, that of "flexibility" seems to imply that elaborated code language possesses a greater potential for adapting meaningfully to the specific needs of the situation of use. Put another way, it is to be assumed that elaborated code language is capable of a wider, subtler range of register adjustments than is restricted code language. This seems to fit logically enough with the linguistic criterion of syntactical predictability. Here again, however, the linguistic criterion of flexibility masks a sociological dimension: the individual's degree of mastery of the situational categories of society.

As can be seen, the linguistic features adduced for the two types of linguistic behaviour remain closely linked to social and psychological dimensions. Indeed, the greatest originality of Bernstein's theory is its attempt to integrate the social, psychological and linguistic components of the socialisation process. This approach has, however, its drawbacks. As Coulthard remarks:

> Bernstein apparently divides language into two kinds, three times, using his sociological, linguistic and psychological definitions, and then gives each of the three pairs the same names. (Open U;95)

This may a slightly uncharitable statement of the situation; nevertheless, it does reflect one's confusion when faced with what is basically a tridisciplinary approach, and it must be admitted that there does occasionally appear to be confusion between the three dimensions, particularly as their respective contributions to the definition-types are extremely closely linked.

Speaking very generally, in sociological terms the two codes correspond to two types of social relationship, at the micro level of the family unit - with its implications for the early education and socialisation of the child - or at the macro level of society as a whole (and how the individual perceives it). Here the distinction is between the person defined through his role in the group (restricted code) or as an individual (elaborated code). At the level of society as a whole, or of the wider intermediate social group, the parallel is drawn between the monolithic model of society, placing "the WE above the I" (1971;166) and the pluralistic model which prizes variation and individuality.

In terms of psychology - or is it of social psychology? - restricted code behaviour is associated with a stylised, inward-looking, static cognitive style; elaborated code goes with an individualised, outward-going, expanding approach (cf. Henderson, 1971;703). Both these behaviour styles manifest themselves in different ways of using language, and there the analysis would end, but for the often demonstrated fact that language in turn facilitates or hinders the development of cognitive processes (relevant research listed in Lawton, 1968, ch;5).

The use, in the preceding paragraphs, of the expression "code language" as distinct from "code" reflects the stress which Bernstein and his associates lay increasingly on the fact that codes are primary at the level of cognition: their linguistic manifestations are only some of the possible behavioural consequences of restricted or elaborated codalism. If we are to incorporate codes in our model, it might be in terms of the "psycholect". But whatever terminology is to be used, it appears increasingly throughout the literature that restricted code and the associated linguistic performance must be considered as socially a highly disadvantageous, even a pathological state. As it is, the enumeration of the presumed lexical and syntactic traits of restricted code language remind one more than slightly of the middle stages of aphasia - a kind of autism at the level of the social group.

Clearly it is out of the question to equate restricted code language entirely and exclusively with the sociolect(s) of the working class. Indeed, to quote only one instance, Jackson and Marsden give explicit illustrations of the process of sociolectal expansion among working class grammar school pupils in Huddersfield (1962;102). To be fair to Bernstein, he continually emphasises that restricted code language is used by <u>some</u> of the <u>lower</u> working class - a crucially important reservation, for all its vagueness.

A major implication for Bernstein's original two-tier stratification model emerges from the work of Jenny Cook-Gumperz, who marshals a considerable body of evidence attesting significant differences in the parental control strategies and associated language behaviour current in different social classes. Interestingly, she works in terms of three social categories instead of Bernstein's two: middle, "mixed" (= lower middle and upper working) and "working" (=lower working) classes; to these three, correspond respectively <u>personal</u>, <u>positional</u> and <u>imperative</u> control modes. It would be an over-simplification, though, to posit a neat one-to-one correspondence. As Ms Cook-Gumperz observes:

> The middle class combined elements of the imperative [sic. positional?] mode (limited positional appeals) and elements of the imperative mode (commands). The mixed class showed a strong preference for emotional support, and selected strategies which were more like middle-class strategies. [Apart from the interesting social assumptions this remark reveals, it would seem to deal a death-blow to the "restricted code = working class" view] The working class, although they used more strategies from the imperative mode (physical punishment), chose more affective appeals within the personal mode. (1973;207)

To draw a semantic parallel from French, it seems as inadmissible to equate "working class" en bloc with "restricted code users" as it is to confuse the terms pauvreté and misère. To be pauvre is simply an economic state, whereas to be dans la misère entails a whole life-style and world-view - which includes a downward spiral in so far as mobility is possible. It seems increasingly justifiable to associate the restricted code type of cognitive behaviour with les misérables - those who are trapped in their social position by a relatively underdeveloped, context-dependent language and way of thought, those for whom the only way out depends on some major form of social and/or educational engineering. This point of view seems the more tenable in the light of the observations about lower working class speech and cognitive development, by Bereiter and Engelmann; according to those authors:

> In lower-class homes, it would appear that the cognitive uses of language are severely restricted, especially in communication between adults and children. Language is primarily used to control behaviour, to express sentiments and emotions, to permit the vicarious sharing of experience and to keep the social machinery of the home running smoothly. (1966;31)

Of these four functions, the first corresponds to broad differences in cognitive and linguistic approach, as we see from Cook-Gumperz and others. It is also closely related to the last, which reflects the distinction in society models between the position-

and the person-oriented. The two others are presumably characterised by a tendency to the concrete and the particularistic and by the WE/I hierarchy.

These four functions are not, of course, the exclusive purlieu of the "lower classes"; the point, according to Bereiter and Engelmann, is that the language of these social strata is limited to the four functions.

> What is lacking [by comparison with the usage of "better-educated middle-class people"] is the use of language to explain, to describe, to instruct, to inquire, to hypothesise, to analyse, to compare, to deduce and to test. And these are the uses that are necessary for academic success. (1966;32)

Interpreting this situation as one of cultural deprivation, the authors draw a parallel between the culturally deprived and the deaf:

> Both kinds of children are seriously deprived - the deaf child because he cannot understand what is said, the lower-class child because he is not sufficiently exposed to language in its cognitive uses. (1966;32)

Here we are discussing linguistic and, consequently, cognitive development, within sociolects - or within subcategories of sociolects. But we have gone well beyond the correlation of social and linguistic parameters: the problem has become one of cognitive development. The limitations of restricted code behaviour, as described by Bereiter and Engelmann, progressively rule out the development of expanding linguistic skills; this in turn thwarts cognitive expansion. Restricted code takes on increasingly dark overtones as a pathological situation.

However, it seems debatable to limit restricted code to even a portion of the working class. Depending as it does on the degree of cognitive stimulation received by the child, on the entire socialisation process and the authoritarian nature of the environment, it seems that we should be prepared to find such behaviour cropping up throughout society.[6] It may be that the cultural stereotype of the "upper-class twit" is in

fact another manifestation of restricted code. The restrictions may be slightly different and the linguistic output may approximate more closely to the superficial characteristics of the language associated with elaborated code, but the cognitive inflexibility is there just the same. It is almost certainly the case, though, that in the upper strata of society there are other factors which compensate for this cognitive deprivation - for at the root of the restricted code debate this is what we are discussing - and that these "bonus factors", while they may not guarantee the unlucky individual upward social mobility, at least protect him from downward progression. Working-class children or adults, though, have no such "bonus factors" and depend entirely on language for access to wider social or educational experience.

Bernstein himself stresses that restricted code behaviour is, in fact, available throughout society - an aspect of the theory that seems open to question in the light of preceding definitions. We are told firmly that while the flexible, expanding elaborated code and its associated language are limited to some sectors of society, everyone - including elaborated code users - possesses a restricted code. This assertion seems to reflect certain secondary linguistic indices of restricted code language, as well as Bernstein's distinction between "universalistic" and "particularistic" systems of meaning - corresponding respectively to explicit and implicit content.

> ... because a restricted code is universalistic with reference to its models, all people have access to its special syntax and to various systems of local condensed meanings; but because an elaborated code is very unlikely to be particularistic with reference to its models, only some people will have access to its syntax and to the universalistic character of its meanings. (1971;130)

The access referred to here depends on "access to specialised social positions, by virtue of which a particular type of speech model is made available" (ibid.) which depends ultimately on educational opportunity.

> In terms of learning the codes, the codes are different. The syntax of a restricted code may be learned informally or readily. The greater range of, and selection from, the

> syntactic alternatives of an elaborated code normally requires a much longer period of formal and informal learning. (1971;130)

If "restricted code" is defined only in sociological terms, as a compressed, contextualised form of expression and communication reflecting close acquaintanceship and shared knowledge - a superficial feature of the restricted code - this seems fair enough. If, on the other hand, it is the case that the codes stem from different cognitive styles and are characterised by the range of syntax available, it become difficult to conceive that users of elaborated code, with all it entails, would willingly regress at cognitive and syntactic levels. It seems probable that here there is confusion between linguistic and psychological definitions - this is not an unknown phenomenon: for instance Lawton (1968;98) suggests the case of the Vatican guide using language accessible to all his listeners, by virtue of its explicitness, yet because of its linguistically predictable nature it is classified according to the rule-book as an instance of restricted code; Bernstein himself has confirmed this judgment, on the grounds of the ritualisation of the speech involved, but unfortunately without considering whether the guide's listeners considered the commentary accessible or otherwise.

The apparently "restricted code" used in shared context by elaborated code language users might be better interpreted as an abridgment of elaborated code language - the "systems of local condensed meanings" mentioned by Bernstein. But the same speakers could easily reformulate this hermetic usage for the benefit of an outsider, which a true restricted code user would be unable to do. We should perhaps think of explicit and contextualised forms of language as reflecting the degree or amount of common ground between participants, regardless of the social structure and cognitive systems in play, and reserve the term restricted code and the concepts related to it for what,in terms of cognitive development, educational opportunity, social integration and personal fulfilment, appears as a dramatic condition.

...AND LANGUAGE TEACHING If we consider the concepts of code, sociolect and register in terms of their relevance to language

teaching, we must first ask: which language teaching? To start with the easiest, the classic form of foreign language teaching - teaching a second language to pupils sharing a first language which is also the language of the environing society - it would seem that the most immediately relevant concept is that of register. To move beyond a one-dimensional competence in the foreign language, one guaranteed at most to ensure physical survival, one must have an awareness of the main types of variation undergone by that language according to the situation of use, the medium, the function to be fulfileed, etc., and ideally, an ability to produce appropriately differentiated language. A major step in this direction has existed in the form of Crystal and Davy's Investigating English Style. To quote from their introduction, referring initially to the foreign learner of English:

> He too needs to be made aware of the difference between common and rare types of language behaviour, and of the alternatives available in particular situations; he too needs to react appropriately to language if he wants to be accepted - and the same applies to the native speaker of English when he learns another language. (1969;6)

The authors stress, and it is impossible not to agree with them, that in acquiring an awareness of relevant differences, "the natural process of habit-formation in this respect may be reinforced, supplemented and speeded up by a more rational approach" (ibid.) through analysis and description. These processes will presumably take two forms: basic research to provide raw data and an overall map of variation in a given language, followed by selection and organisation of pedagogic materials, and secondly, the elaboration of research-style classroom strategies.

To this I would add, in an ideal foreign language learning situation, a general initiation into the main social and geographic variants of the language, firstly as a legitimate object of study in their own right, but at a more practical level, to temper the foreign learner's tendency to wholesale unselective parroting, in the hope that the result will not be a mongrel parrot.

The other main second-language teaching situation involves teaching the language of the environing society to temporary or permanent newcomers - for instance, to immigrants. Here there is no ideological problem, since the move is being made from one language to the other for evidently practical reasons, and there is no question (it is to be honed) of the original language and culture necessarily being jettisoned in the process. Broadly, I would regard this situation as inherently differing only marginally from any other foreign language teaching. The difference will arise, however, in the degree of motivation of pupils and the necessity for teaching to produce rapid, effective results - though this will probably be helped, if not by a stronger motivation to learn, at least by the potentially supportive presence of the language in the everyday environment.

In the teaching of the first language, clearly the main priority must be to expand the language repertory and refine the precision of the conscious use of what is after all our main tool for conceptualisation, expression and communication. Just how we do this will be influenced by the point of departure of the pupils. Whatever the sociolectal mix of learners and teachers, the aim will presumably to attain maximum comprehension and comprehensibility. Where the sociolectal backgrounds differ greatly, however, it is essential that the nature of this difference be understood, in particular by the teacher, to avoid confusion between sociolectal differences in repertory and codal differences of scope. This is where the general linguistic awareness hoped for by Roger Shuy (1972) comes into play. It seems unjustifiable to insist on replacing the original sociolect with another - a practice not unknown even now; it may be that this attitude reveals a sympathy with the pluralistic model of society, but even so, regardless of the ethics involved, it seems wasteful and inefficient to devote time and energy to eradicating habits and discarding resources which could more fruitfully be built on. In a way the sociolect dilemma is more difficult to deal with than the immigrant teaching problem, in that the immigrant learner should normally not feel that his home culture is being devalued in the process; on the other hand, attemps to inculcate alternative sociolects by definition imply

unfavourable value judgments - unless the original sociolect is carefully maintained, its resources exploited.

In our model sociolects are expanding, productive variants of language, capable of fulfilling all language functions. For incidental, societal reasons, they may not, and indeed there is a tendency for dialects and sociolects, each in their way, to converge in certain domains of language use. In short, I am tempted to say that given an adequate treatment of register variation, sociolectal variation will find its own level. It can, after all, be maintained that if we take, for instance, the scale of formality, the degree of divergence between the language forms used will increase as we move from the most formal to the least, from the macro- towards the micro-group.

One reason for the discredit that has come to surround compensatory education, in many circles, is that the difference between codes and sociolects was not realised, so that in many instances compensatory educations programmes were bestowed arbitrarily and, probably, unnecessarily, with no great advantage to the recipients: the "new" language could do little that the old could not, and so it is understandable that at times the process came to be viewed as an attempt by one social group to foist its superficial usages on another. This was the case with many speakers of Black English, and may well have created social tensions outweighing the initial alleged educational problems. If we can treat such issues dispassionately, we will be able to provide the teaching appropriate to the situation; sociolectal variation is a potential enrichment of first language teaching, if placed in a dynamic framework sych as that provided in Doughty's Language in Use. Other experiments such as the "language experience" strategy reported by Shuy seem to bear out this view.

On the other hand, the influence of restricted code language is no asset - quite the reverse. Bernstein states firmly that:

> Clearly one code is not better than any other; each possesses its own aesthetic, its own possibilities. Society, however, may place different values on the orders of experience elicited, maintained and progressively strengthened through the different coding systems. (1971;135)

If, however, we accept the definition of restricted code as an all-pervasive factor limiting the individual's access to the resources of his society, it is difficult not to conclude that some codes are better than others; otherwise the implication is that society must be viewed as a rigid caste system (an aspect associated with restricted code cognition, incidentally).

In an open, mobile society, language governed by restricted code must be dealt with specially, as it represents a symptom of self-perpetuating cognitive and developmental deprivement. Some cases of Black English come into this category, of course, but not because of blackness in itself, rather because of the pupil's ghetto-style background and lack of intellectual stimuli. Similarly for working class language - or for any other, come to that. It must be admitted, however, that the restricted code situation is more likely to occur among the generally most disadvantaged sectors of the population, by which I mean les misérables, the "grey children" to borrow Patrick Creber's phrase.

Here extra care over education in general, and language education in particular seems quite in order - but still following the strategy of building on the existing culture, however impoverished, rather than attempting a wholesale transplant. Far from such intervention representing middle class presumption, it seems that it would be far more of a long-term interference not to interfere, simply because restricted code behaviour is inadequate to give access to educational, social and personal fulfilment. Surely this is an adequate argument in favour of investing considerably in this particular sector - but there is a less altruistic argument too: the existence of an alienated bloc of poor greys is unlikely to make for a healthy society; the grey children of today are going to take their flick-knives to football matches tomorrow, or rally round the next hate-based mass movement. Our century has already seen more than enough of these. But that takes us well beyond the field of applied linguistics. 19

To conclude, at the most general level, the relevance of sociolinguistics and its categories ro language education - to education, in fact - appears at two levels. The study of sociolectal and register variation has its place behind the scenes at the research and course design stage, and as an overt component in classroom teaching, the aim being the expansion and variation of the individual's active and passive language repertories. There will, however, be groups of pupils who have acquired a non-expanding cognitive and linguistic approach; something will have to be done for them if language education and education through language are ever going to get off the ground. Here interdisciplinary studies of codes or of similar phenomena should help us identify and understand certain basic educational (and not only schooling) problems - which seems the first step towards at least a partial solution. In short, providing we do not confuse the two types of research, each has its role to play in enabling pupils to come to terms with language, and so, with society.

John ROSS
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1. Personal communication, 1973.
2. For instance, the article by Ehlich and Rehbein, "On pragmatic units in an institution: restaurant."
3. cf. Pike, 1967. His conception of pragmemics would come close to this type of integration.
4. For instance, Stuart Hibberd's ceremonial commentaries from the late Thirties, or an interview with Ivy Compton-Burnett recorded in 1948.
5. It is hoped to incorporate discussion of these topics in an expanded version of the present paper.
6. Bernstein (1971;143) provides a rhetorical identikit of the oppressed subproletariat; but such cumulative frustration is conceivable at any level in society.

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